

Mildred Harnack

Mildred Harnack was born in 1902 in Milwaukee. She attended West Division High School (now Milwaukee High School of the Arts) and George Washington University, eventually transferring to the University of Wisconsin at Madison. In 1926, she became an instructor of English Literature, where her specialty was American Writers.

In 1926, she married Arvid Harnack. In 1929, the Harnacks moved to Germany where they both found teaching positions at the University in Berlin. At the outbreak of World War II, the Harnacks formed an underground resistance group and published *The Inner Front*, a biweekly underground newspaper. In addition, they gathered and broadcast information about German military advances to the Eastern Front.

The group was exposed by a captured Russian spy. The Harnacks were captured and sentenced to death for treason. Mildred Harnack was put to death on February 16, 1943. She was the only American woman executed by the Gestapo as a resistance leader.

Today, Mildred Harnack's birth date is a Special Observance Day in Wisconsin's public schools, where her efforts are honored by children throughout the state.